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### A Day in the life of an Architecture Practice

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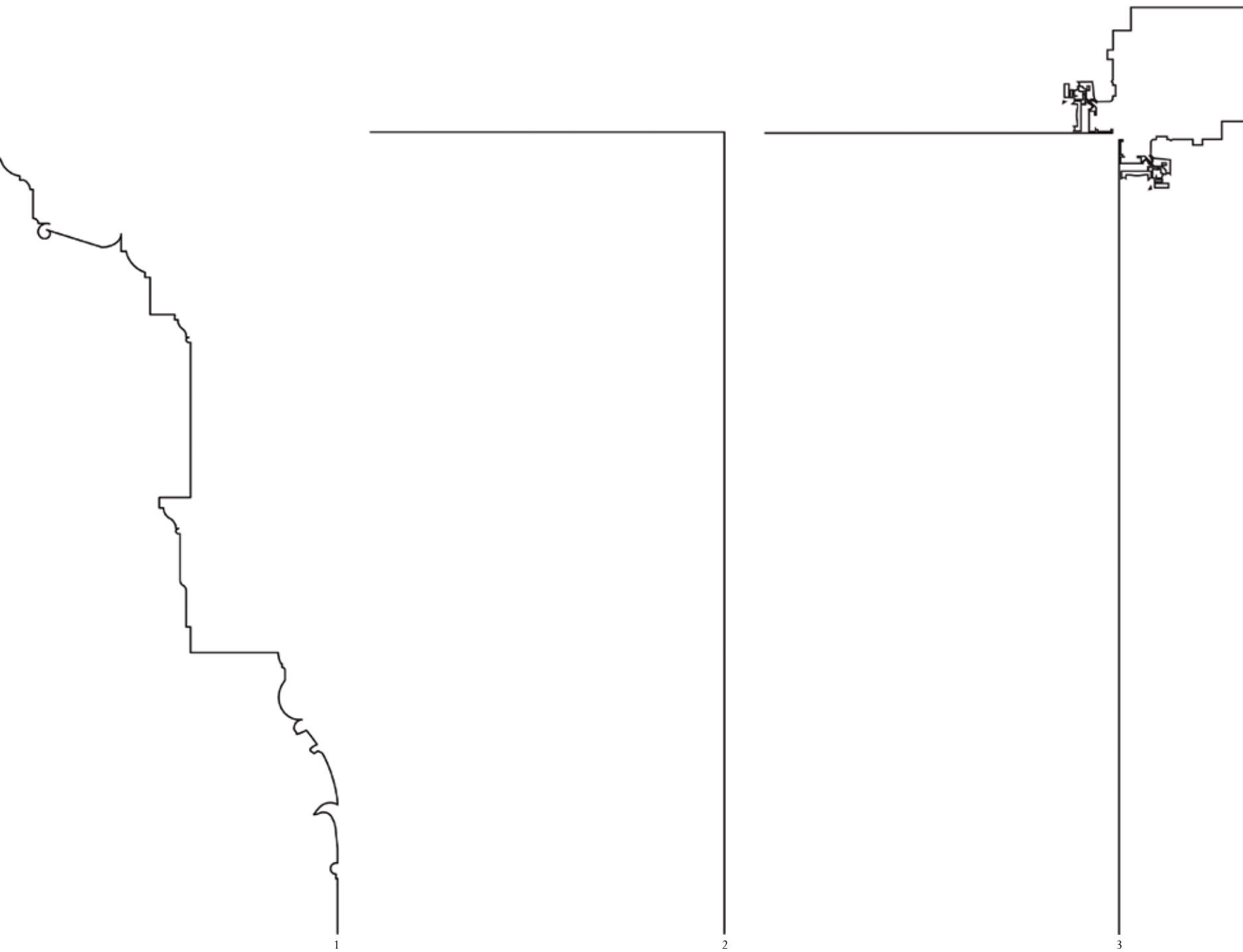
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assembled rather than crafted. However, the appearance of this logic is neither necessary nor effortless; it demands a new hierarchy of visibility to present itself. Today, man-work – the evidence of hand fixing – recedes, to allow machine-work – the factory-produced panel – to advance. Shadow-gaps and flush-fittings are enjoyable because they bury the evidence of fixing – rails, dabs, services, cisterns, etc. - allowing for a fantastic exchangeability of our products.

Architecture appears by organising labour, and is political as it is aesthetic. Architecture establishes policies that create a *distribution of the sensible*<sup>1</sup> – a system of sensible facts that disclose the existence of something in common and define the respective parts and positions within it. Architectural policies establish the terms of work employed by building, and determine the relative visibility of that work, awarding some work a public appearance, and other work obscurity. Historically, architecture has given pride of place to the finesse of decoration over the utility of building, the fantastic image of the machine-work over the evidence of the handcraft, and to the free-floating component over its deflating fixing. Architecture often makes claims concerning its transparency – about its ability to immediately make manifest work as work, without an intervening hierarchy of visibility – claiming to simply present the immanent logic of some kind of material, distribution, fabrication, assembly, maintenance or demolition. However, this appears to be precisely what it can't do; in organising construction, resolving building junctions, architecture can't help but put one kind of work before another.

<sup>1</sup> Jacques Rancière, *The Politics of Aesthetics*, Continuum, 2004



1. convoluted junction: Internal corner profile, section, Corinthian capital, architrave, frieze and cornice.
2. direct junction: Interior corner profile, plan/section, Villa La Roche/Jeanerret.
3. involution junction: Interior corner profile, plan/section, Velfac 200 rainscreen, interface for steel frame and aluminium cladding.

## Office Time | A Day in the life of an Architecture Practice

Foreign Office Architects &  
Chris Speed

On the 4th of September 2009, a Twitter account was registered by the London office of Foreign Office Architects. The login details were distributed to all staff, and everybody in the office was asked to Tweet on their activities as they changed throughout the day.

The subsequent stream of information chronologically documented the different range of tasks, jobs and processes that supported the work of the architecture practice. Detailed as though it was a monologue from one individual, the variety of activities hints at the complexity of sustaining a contemporary office.

The FOA Twitter feed is compared against the English monastic summers day that was introduced during the early to mid eleventh century (Burton 1994:160).<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Burton, J. E. (1994) Monastic and religious orders in Britain, 1000-1300, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.



Interior of Gilberts Architects, Edinburgh. Photo: C.Speed © 2009

